

**Remarks**

1. Objections to the Specification and the Claims

The office action objects to the specification for allegedly failing to provide proper antecedent basis for claim elements in claims 22 and 23. In response, the paragraph beginning on page 10, at line 27 has been amended to clarify its teachings of the specification so as to include the claim elements of claims 22 and 23, specifically the “stuffers.” It is submitted that the claims as originally filed are part of the teachings of the application. Accordingly, by restating that which originally appeared in the claims in the specification, no new matter has been added by these amendments.

The Examiner has also objected to claims 3 and 18. In response claim 3 has been amended to place the language in conformity with claim 1. Similarly, claim 18 has been amended to conform the language to claims 16 and 17.

Therefore, it is requested that the objections to the specification and the claims be withdrawn.

2. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner’s attention is drawn to the preceding amendment to the specification. As a result of this amendment, it is submitted that claims 22 and 23 are no longer indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

3. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

The office action rejects claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by one or more of U.S. Patents Nos. 5,302,251 to Schiel; 4,559,258 to Kiuchi; and 5,840,378 to Nagura. In response, the rejections are traversed for at least the following reasons.

With respect to Schiel, it is submitted that the crests 27 relied upon by the Examiner are not guides as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. Guides, as contemplated by the instant application extend in the MD direction. But as shown in Figs. 5-7 of Schiel, the crests 27 extend in the CD direction. Accordingly, the crests 27 cannot be equated with the guides of claim 1.

Similarly, Kiuchi teaches the formation of projections 13, coupled with channels 14 for dewatering. The channels and projections are not guides, as taught by the instant application “guides [are] intended to fit into a peripheral groove in each of the rolls.” (p. 2, lns. 14-15). By their layout and design, the channels and projections of Kiuchi cannot and do not act as guides. Accordingly, the channels and projections cannot be equated with the guides of claim 1.

Finally, with respect to Nagura, it is submitted that the Examiner is in error by stating that the reference teaches a “v-guide 8 at the ends of the belt that fills in at least 85% of the fabric structure.” Indeed, the specification explicitly states in col. 5, lines 16-21:

The total amount of the polyurethane resin in the antiflexing part is required to be such as to fill not less than 85% of the empty space in the woven fabric. If this amount is less than 85%, the antiflexing part will produce an insufficient antiflexing effect and permit no sufficient fusion with the guide ridge.

Accordingly, the guide does not form 85% of the fabric structure as alleged by the Examiner. Rather it forms a maximum of 15%.

Further, claim 1 of the instant application teaches encapsulation as the means for attaching the guides to the fabric. In contrast, Nagura teaches only the use of known melt bonding techniques that result in a surface to surface fusion of components. Those of skill in the art will recognize that for good surface to surface fusion, the components being bonded must have chemical compatibility or the bond will be very weak. In contrast, encapsulation is not a

surface to surface fusion, and therefore chemical compatability is not a factor. Accordingly, melt bonding and encapsulation cannot be equated.

Therefore, for at least these reasons discussed above, claim 1 of the instant application patentably distinguishes over the relied upon portions of the cited references and is allowable. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is requested.

In the event that the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing comments concerning the disclosures in the cited prior art, it is requested that the Examiner indicate where in the reference, there is the basis for a contrary view.

The Examiner has apparently made of record, but not applied, several documents. The Applicants appreciate the Examiner's implicit finding that these documents, whether considered alone or in combination with others, do not render the claims of the present application unpatentable.

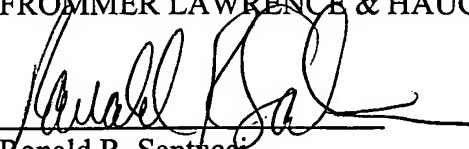
#### **CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable over the prior art, and early and favorable consideration thereof is solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fee that may be required to Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,  
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